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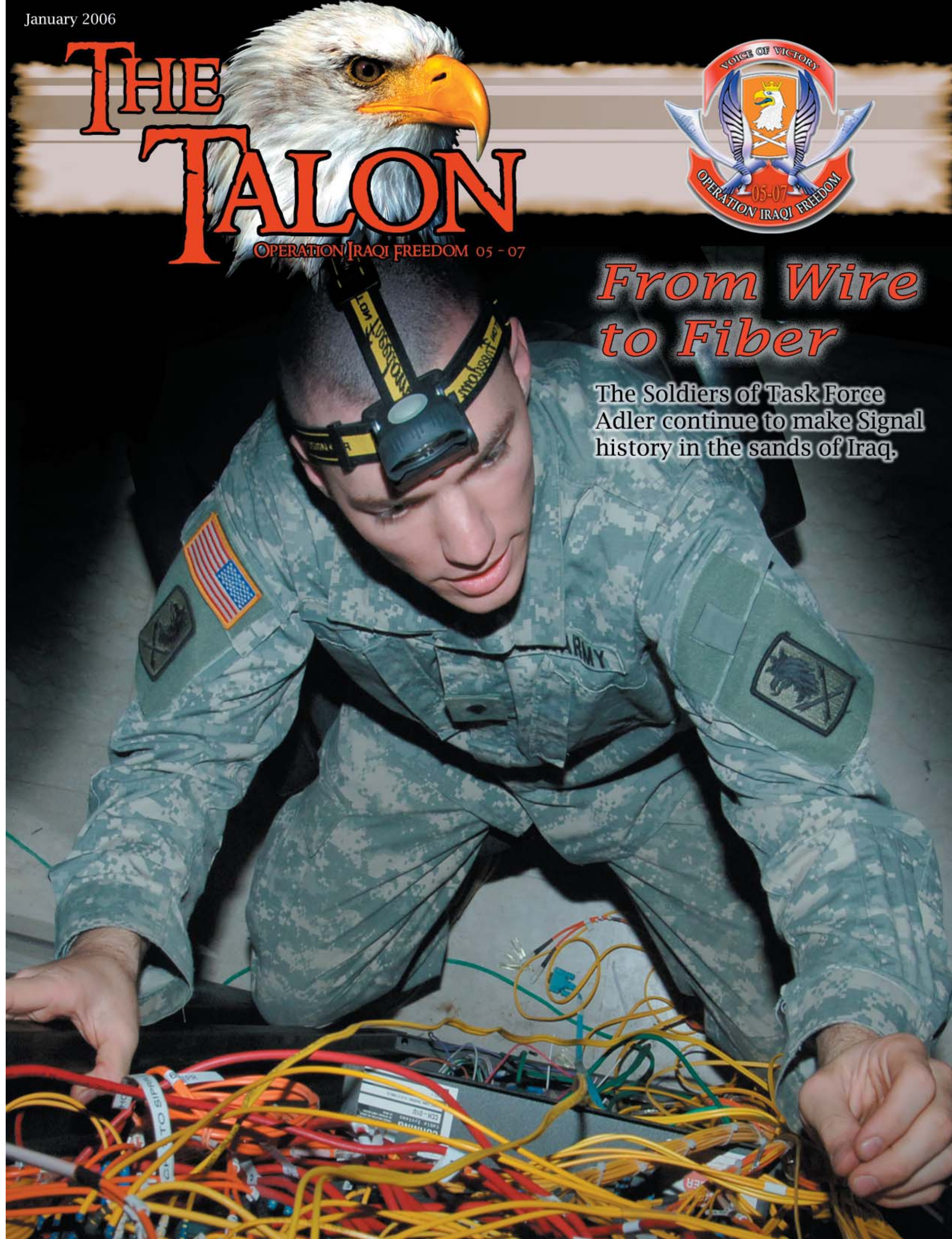
THE TALON

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM 05-07



From Wire to Fiber

The Soldiers of Task Force
Adler continue to make Signal
history in the sands of Iraq.



TASK FORCE ADLER COMMANDER

OUT WITH THE OLD...IN WITH THE NEW

COL Frederick A. Cross

Time waits for no one...just where did the year go? As I look back at all that we have accomplished over the past year; the endless training exercises, an emotional deployment, a long anticipated Transfer of Authority here in Iraq, and now maintaining an extremely large and complex communications network, let me just say, I cannot be more proud of this team's effort and dedication to mission accomplishment. As we posture ourselves to address the challenges the New Year will bring, I want us to approach these challenges head on. I enter the new year with great hope and expectations; that peace and understanding will prevail and spread throughout this land. My prayer for all is that the Lord will continue to bless us as individuals and as a unit, so that through our combined accomplishments, we will make a difference in the life of a people and ultimately bring liberty and democracy to this country.

We have definitely moved into another stage of our ability to accomplish our mission.

I have had time to personally assess, gage and provide feedback as to our way ahead as a Task Force. I can report that you have used your time wisely by focusing on those critical tasks and technical skills required by our soldiers to be successful in a changing environment. We are truly turning the corner in transforming our tactics, techniques and procedures, and also equipment to support the requirements of the future. The vast majority of our soldiers have had to learn new technology, new skills, and different management techniques, all at an accelerated pace, through mostly

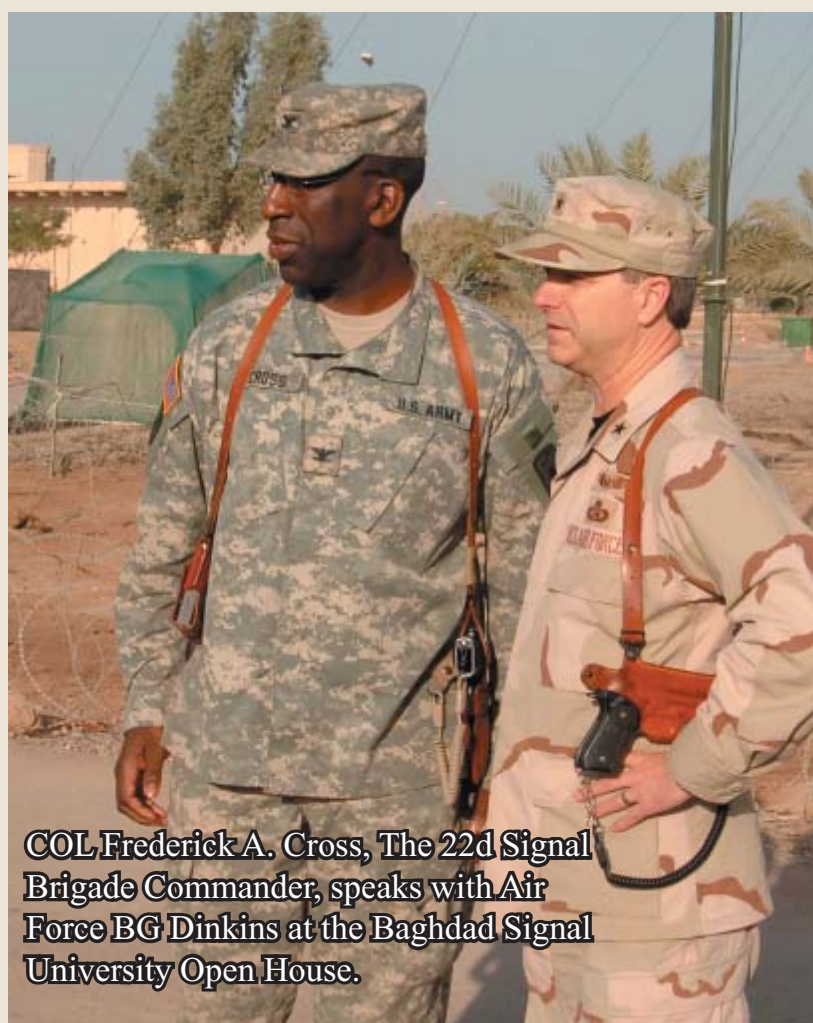
on the job training. Let me state unequivocally, you've met all these challenges and then some! Your technical abilities have rocketed from zero to sixty in the blink of an eye. Over time your jargon has transformed from terms such as copper wire, switchboards and telephones to terms such as fiber optics, Promina, call manager, and Voice over the Internet (VoIP). Yes, out with the old and in with the new.

As we change to address the future, there is one thing that must remain a constant...our ability to provide the commander the absolute best network and communications services possible. You have a major role and an awesome responsibility in our commitment to this war on terror and helping to bring democracy and justice to this nation. While serving our nation and fighting our nation's battles here and now, I encourage you to remain steadfast, see it through, and help provide a better tomorrow. I have

faith in you and the leadership of this organization to do all that is required to get the job done to standard.

As we look toward tomorrow, I believe that teamwork, enforcing standards, and maintaining discipline will ensure that we accomplish our goals and objectives together in the coming year. May God continue to impart his wonderful blessings on each of you and your families.

Victory's Voice! Teamwork!



COL Frederick A. Cross, The 22d Signal Brigade Commander, speaks with Air Force BG Dinkins at the Baghdad Signal University Open House.

MY NAME IS CLARK AND I'M A SOLDIER

CSM Thomas J. Clark

It is important to keep in touch with your loved ones in order to keep them informed and ease their minds while you are away from home. I wanted to write a letter to the families and thank them for sharing their most precious gift with us, your son/daughter/spouse.

Dear Loved One,

Your son/daughter/spouse, (fill in Soldier's name here) was recently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 05-07. First, I'd like to express my sincere thanks to you and your family. He/She is one of the many dedicated men and women who have sacrificed time, and given their service and more for the Iraqi people, for freedom, for democracy, and for the future of Iraq. He/She is a shining example of today's outstanding young American Soldier.

He/She is proudly wearing his/her combat patch and has been awarded the Iraq Campaign Medal – both of these were awarded to Soldiers who deployed to Iraq in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Please let the entire town of (Soldier's home town) know of these outstanding accomplishments.

I would like to personally thank-you for providing this nation with one of America's sons/daughters who defend its freedom and our way of life.

In the area of good news, we want you to know some of the things that the Multi-national Corps in Iraq has accomplished. We have helped the Iraqi people assume sovereignty over their country, hold free elections, draft a democratic constitution and approve that constitution in a nationwide referendum. The Iraqi schools are open with new supplies, new textbooks, and lots of hope for the future. The Iraqi people are now producing more fresh water and electricity than they were before the war started. The hospitals and orphanages are open and are actually getting the supplies they need to help all of the people... not just the elite of the past. New businesses are starting up every day. In addition, the Iraqis are taking control of the security aspect of their country. They are starting to guard important resources like water, electricity and oil production facilities.

They are voting for their leaders and their future. Your son/daughter helped to make this all happen. He/she is bringing hope to a troubled land.

His/Her performance under extremely difficult conditions has earned the respect and admiration of the American people, the good citizens of Iraq, and the world community. The sacrifices that he/she has made for this mission and the Iraqi people have made a tremendous difference and will never be forgotten. We are proud of his/her contribution to Task Force Adler, the Global War on Terrorism, and in bringing peace and stability to this troubled area.

Your son/daughter is an American Hero and so are you. Happy Holidays from my family to yours. Last, I need your help. Next time you talk to your Soldier, please tell them you're proud of them, wear your seatbelt, safety glasses and IBA. Slow down and think safety.



CSM Thomas J. Clark, the 22d Signal Brigade Command Sergeant Major, salutes the families of Task Force Adler

Very Respectfully,
CSM Clark
Soldier

A REASON TO CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS

Chaplain (LTC) Dixey F. Behnken

On December 21 & 23, In Columbus, Ohio, with holiday shopping at its zenith, a small idea which Chaplain (LTC) Dixey Behnken, 22nd Signal Brigade Chaplain, shared with Viki Phelps, of Columbus, Ohio, grew into a reality larger than both had imagined. Ch Behnken merely mentioned that phone cards are the best gift to give at Christmas and a great way to support the troops. Viki Phelps shared the idea with her friend, Shawn Ireland, a DJ with Sunny 95 FM Christian Radio. They started brainstorming and came up with several ways that they could bless our nations's troops with phone cards for this Christmas season. They settled on two ideas.

After contacting a few different businesses, Shawn Ireland, got approval to do a live radio show in Sam's Club. CH Behnken would call in from Baghdad and have a live interview over the radio and over the public address system to encourage the holiday shoppers to consider purchasing a phone card to send to troops. Sam's Club decided they would do three things. They would open three hours early to promote this special project; they would waive the normal \$35 club card fee, and they would give cake and drinks to all who made the purchase of the phone cards.

No one knew that people would stand in line at 7:00 a.m. in the morning, with temperatures 11 degrees below zero, waiting to buy phone cards for troops, but there they were!

When Chaplain Behnken called in for the live radio interview over the loudspeaker system, Viki said, "Everything in the store came to an absolute standstill, it was total quite. Everyone listened to how troops can use phone cards and why they were one of the best gifts to send to our troops." Viki said, "The air was

just filled with excitement and electricity, and hundreds were in line to buy the phone cards!" Viki was elated at how just a small thought could erupt with such a grand response. "But, isn't that what Christmas is all about?" she said. "A small baby's birth is celebrated, and that birth changes the entire world!" The second idea was to conduct another live radio interview at the annual Ohio State Christmas Gala. This event was two days later where many groups and choirs from across metropolitan Columbus come to sing Christmas Carols. The applause and cheers of many hundreds could be heard over the phone as Chaplain (LTC) Behnken began to speak.

He thanked them for their prayers, their support, their encouragement and their generosity and told them how grateful the soldiers will be when they receive their Christmas phone cards. Sam's Club representatives came on stage and announced that they had received more than \$3,700 worth of phone card minutes, and more are still being added. Sam's Club had set up a booth for purchases at the Christmas Show just to facilitate the "Phone Cards for Troops" program. Chaplain (LTC) Behnken said to the audience: "Our troops are honored by the generosity of all of you great Americans! Strengthening family and marriage ties through these phone cards you are giving is essential for our military members ability to stay connected and to cope when they are serving so far away from home."

The primary mission of the 22d Signal Brigade, Task Force Adler is to provide communications to joint and coalition forces in the Iraqi theater. It is comprised of approximately 3,800 soldiers who work to secure Iraqi freedom and conduct the global war against terrorism.

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Spe Alfredo Vega helps to install a fiber infrastructure.



16th Breaks ties with MSE

The 16th Signal Battalion ran over 25 miles of fiber to commercialize the Q'west base complex in record time -- and find their ticket out of Iraq

by CPT Ryan Bardo

Six months ago, the 16th Signal Battalion began commercializing Q'West Base Complex, the future contingency operations base for northern Iraq. Today, thanks to the efforts of the 16th Signal Battalion Cable Team, 54th Signal Battalion personnel, ITT civilians and various units stationed at Q'West, the base is now operating on a tactical-commercialized communications architecture, allowing A Company, 16th Signal Battalion (-) to depart Iraq and return home early enough to spend the holidays with their families.

The commercialization project uses a great deal of commercial off-the-shelf, or "COTS", products purchased from various IT companies including Cisco, Hewlett-Packard, Dell, Redline Communications, DataPath, General Dynamics and Fortress Technologies to provide service to subscribers previously supported by tactical signal assemblages. Through commercialization, the demand for tactical signal assets decreases, a fact expanding across the minds of every signal soldier in theater.

"22nd Signal Brigade has been instrumental in providing the resources to ensure the success of the project, and the civilian contractors working for ITT have ensured that all of the resources were effectively leveraged to provide an excellent network," explained CPT Benjamin Wright, the 16th's Commercialization OIC.

The 16th Signal Battalion Cable Installation Team, aka the "Cable Dogs", have performed the hard work, running in excess of 25 miles of fiber and performing countless terminations and splices to provide the backbone for the fiber network. The cable team had to clear countless manholes and dig miles of trenchlines by coordinating with tenant units on the base such as KBR and the 59th Quartermaster Company. They also ran Cat-5 network cable and fiber cable, installed a line of sight radio system to provide communications to remote parts of the base, and set up and tested a Free-

Space Optics system that uses laser light to transmit data over the air in order to provide maximum coverage for base subscribers.

54th Signal Battalion personnel managed the process to ensure quality communications for the base. They also installed the Tech Control Facility (TCF) and tested the fiber runs and terminations. The ITT civilians, working in conjunction with 54th, ensured all switches were properly configured and working properly while managing all equipment within the TCF. This team effort resulted in a commercial communications solution for subscribers on Q'West and provided a solid foundation on which to further expand the network.

"The commercialization project has allowed for nearly infinite capacity to handle subscribers. Our only limitation is the amount of phones and switches on hand to plug into the system. The goal for the Base Complex is to provide every building with Voice over IP (VoIP) phones, as well as SIPR and NIPR access," said CPT Wright.

Once the base network was up and running, subscribers traded their hardened, green DNVTs for sleek, new Cisco IP phones as they were integrated into the commercial network. Eventually, five SENs and one node center were removed from the tactical network and enthusiastically packed up to ship home. By the end of November, A Company moved to Kuwait, prepared their equipment for redeployment, and flew home to Fort Hood. As the rest of 16th conducts their transition with the 29th Signal Battalion, they look forward to joining them after a mission well-done. Communications First! Leaders!

Spc. Howard's

Military Muscle

Working 12 hours per day, for six to seven days per week can take a toll on any Soldier that far exceeds the energy demands of a garrison environment. Lack of energy, lack of motivation, fatigue, and burnout are all common symptoms among Soldiers in a forward deployed environment. It is common for deployed personnel to resort to chemical stimulation. Red Bull and Starbucks Doubleshot are the two best-selling items in Iraq PXs for a reason. Chemical supplementation is undoubtedly effective, but could have its risks. What was thought to be safe yesterday is banned today. There was a time when Coca Cola contained cocaine. Napoleon Hill, author of "Think and Grow Rich" proposed to Mrs. Hill over a glass of Coke. Was Dr. Hill feeling the rush? Before stricter testing, cocaine use was rampant in sports of all kinds. Chemical supplementation is indeed an option, but it is important to understand that Soldiers have access to a plethora of energy boosting techniques, ranging from just getting enough sleep to the relatively obscure method of boosting ATP reserves through creatine use.

Starting with holistic energizers, common sense is the foundation for higher energy. If you are not taking care of yourself supplements and/or harsher compounds will be of limited value. By getting proper exercise, rest and nutrition the body will be naturally energized.

Also paramount in importance are internal hygiene and proper hydration, which go hand in hand. If your body does not eliminate waste in an efficient manner, your energy levels will sink. Even a slight amount of dehydration can negatively impact performance and elimination. In simpler terms, Drink Water!

Does Spirituality have anything to do with enhanced energy and performance? Recently on "The Ultimate Fighter 2" we saw oddball tough guy Luke Cummo pull his mattress on the floor so his head was pointed to the north. Luke had strange meditation practices and a pentagram on his gi. He came very close to win-

ning it all and beat out other fighters who were favored by the experts.

Darrell Green of the Washington Redskins is a legend. One of the most durable football heroes in history, Darrell was known to be a man of faith. Mr. Green prayed before and after every game.

Did these men raise their energy levels with their spiritual practices? I am of the opinion that it didn't hurt. Whatever your belief system is, are you using it to help you reach your fitness goals? Why not?

Chances are, if you have addressed the above issues, your energy level is going to be good. Sensibly adding natural stimulants at this point will provide more energy.

Sensibly means doing what works for you. Respect your individuality. If one serving of green tea revs you up, go with that. Yohimbe gives me a nice burst of energy. Your mileage may vary.

Okay, you've gotten your rest and exercise, drank water, your diet is right, you have attended to your hygiene. Mental and spiritual work are under control. Now what?

You should make sure that your supplementation supports what you are trying to do. A good multi-vitamin ensures a solid foundation. A body that is deficient of nutrients cannot make the best use of any supplements. How is your ATP? How about arginine or another nitric oxide booster? Your circulation? Anything males can do to make their body produce more testosterone is worth considering.

If the proper foundation has been laid, adding a legal stimulant at this point will provide the maximum benefit. Your energy levels will be at their peak.

You can get a temporary edge by going a little deeper into the wonderful world of better living through chemicals. My position is that the potential downside outweighs the benefits. Next issue, I'll be discussing the importance of proper diet in controlling both energy levels and overall health.



Saying farewell to MSE

Delta Company of the 32nd Signal Battalion helps to phase out the technology that originally gave them a mission as their Soldiers retrain to adapt to a new technology in a new combat environment By CPT Herb Brychta

Make the Tactical Signal Battalion unemployed! Crazy talk? Hardly. When Soldiers in Delta Company, 32nd Signal Battalion finish this deployment, there will be no need for a tactical battalion at LSA Anaconda. The Delta Devils are going to rid LSAA of MSE. How? Delta Company is charged with continuing the effort to install a commercial fiber optic network at Anaconda. Once this is done, the communication network will be similar to DOIM communications in garrison, freeing up tactical signal soldiers for other assignments. Tactical communications provide the bare minimum amount of services that the warfighter needs.

They are designed to be set up and taken down in a hurry and are temporary by nature. Yet LSA Anaconda has survived on tactical signal systems since the 32nd Signal Battalion first installed communications here in 2003. Two and a half years later, the 50th Signal Battalion began installing a transitional fiber optic network with the intent of getting MSE switches out of system. At the time of the transfer of authority between 50th and 32nd in November 2005, there were a very small number of MSE switches still in system. Delta Company will continue this process and turn the transitional network into a perma-



SPC Downey of the 32nd Signal Battalion gets ready to test a fiber run.

nent network, eliminating the need for MSE switches. This mission translates into valuable skills whether the Soldiers stay Army or move into civilian life. Troops are splicing fiber, drawing Computer Aided Design (CAD) plans, and running CAT-5 cable to industry standards. Training in these areas is expensive and practical experience in these fields is very desirable. However, Delta Company Soldiers will not learn these valuable skills without a price. The work is hard and the challenges can be frustrating. Specialist Edward Eastman summed up the duality of this job, "It's like building a ship in a bottle and, eventually, we will all go blind staring at it. But it is much more entertaining than sitting in a shelter for 12 hours." This mission is much bigger than the initial assessment, which called for about 15 soldiers to do the work. In fact, the entire might of Delta Company is dedicated to the commercialization mission. Much of the fiber that 50th ran simply supplied a connection. Resource shortages prevented a robust design. A permanent network requires redundancy and cables buried deeply to protect against future construction projects. A significant portion of the existing fiber will have to be re-run. Additionally, Delta Company Soldiers are also called upon to wire the inside of buildings for units that do not possess the skill set to do it for themselves. All of this makes for one busy company!

And saying hello to FIBER

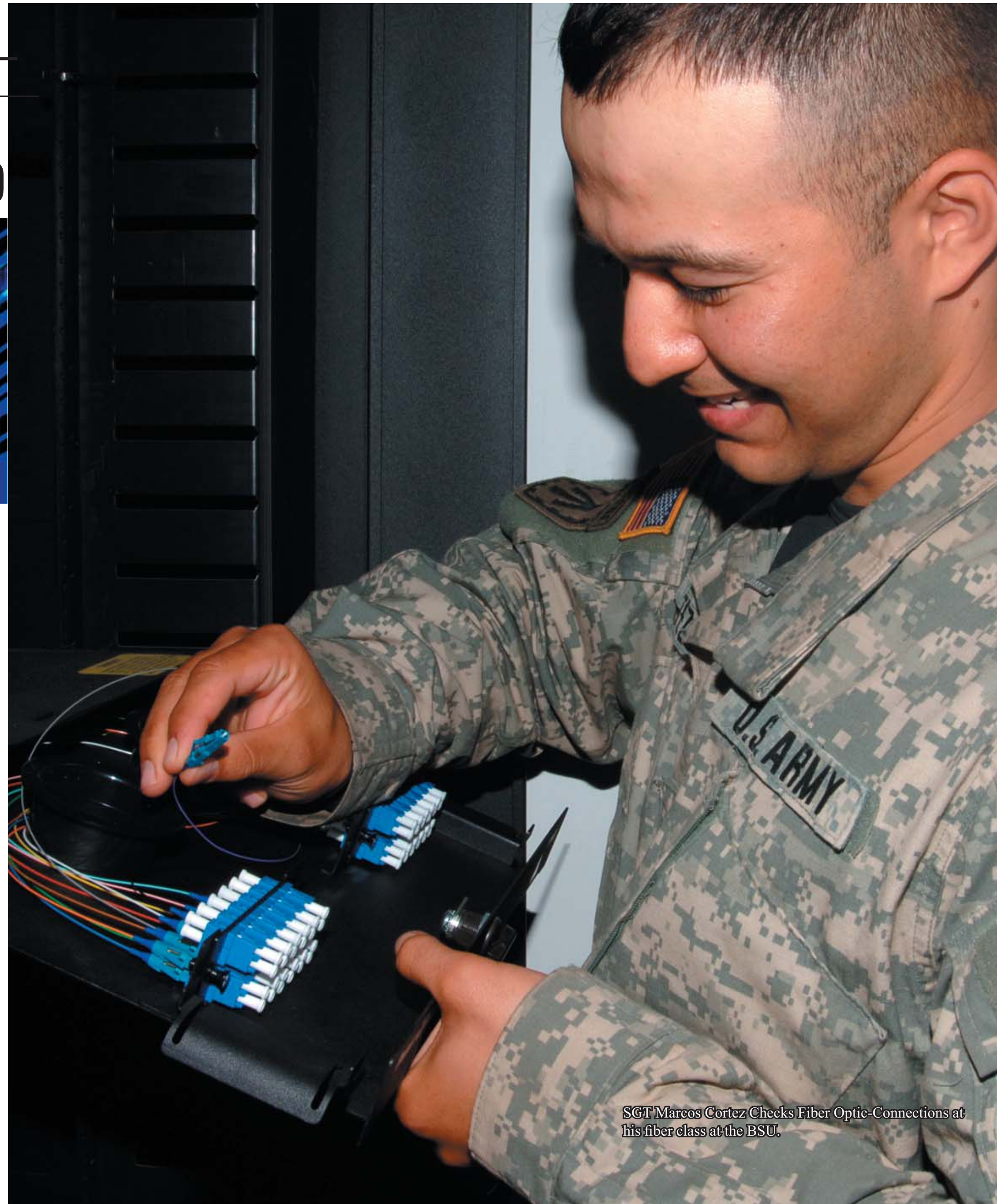
Soldiers of the 440th Signal Battalion are learning the skills they need to replace Iraq's out-dated Mobile Subscriber Equipment network with fiber technology, increasing reliability and reducing the Signal footprint. By CPT Dan Burns

A faint smell from orange scented alcohol cleaning pads hung in the air. 440th Signal Battalion Soldiers were using the pads to wipe the sticky gel from fiber optic strands. The instructor, Joe Reese, was showing students how to separate individual rainbow colored fibers for splicing. One of the few indicators that this class was in a combat zone was the occasional interruption from noisy helicopters taking off just outside. Other indicators were the Advanced Combat Uniforms (ACUs) each student was wearing and the collection of individual weapons. Despite the peculiar proximity to an ac-

tive helicopter landing pad, the class contained the necessary ingredients for success: a seasoned professional instructor; and a group of students eager to learn new skills.

Just over a month ago, Soldiers from the 22nd Signal Brigade left their homes in Darmstadt, Germany. Now at their new home at Camp Victory, Iraq, Soldiers are eager to improve their battlefield abilities. For Signal Soldiers, the battlefield includes communication technologies like Fiber Optics.

Joe Reese has worked with Fiber Optics and other signal equipment for over 31 years. He works for Hyperion,



SGT Marcos Cortez Checks Fiber Optic-Connections at his fiber class at the IBSU.

a civilian company that contracts with the military. He was asked to design a course for Soldiers at Camp Victory about splicing Fiber Optic cables. If the course proved to be beneficial to the Army, additional classes could be implemented. Sixteen Soldiers from 22nd Signal Brigade were chosen as guinea pigs for the first class.

The class started out in a shipping container that had been converted into a conference room. It was a bit crowded; but proved adequate for the lecture portion of the class. For the hands on portion of the class, Joe decided to move to a larger room next to the Helicopter PAX terminal.

The Soldiers were pleased to be presented with this unique learning opportunity. "I've been learning a lot," said SGT Marcos Cortez, "there are lots of new connectors that I haven't seen before. It's a great class. This class is giving me opportunities in both the military and civilian worlds that i wouldn't have gotten any other way." Learning about fiber optics is very relevant for today's Signal Soldiers. Many of the Army's telecommunication networks utilize fiber optic cable. Fiber optic cable has more bandwidth and has a faster data transmission rate than copper wire. In many applications where copper wire was used, fiber optic cable is now being installed to increase performance. Battlefield commanders require the ability to transmit large amounts of data.



SGM Lemuel Brock Presents SGT Eugene Pacheco with a certificate of training at his graduation.

This is something I learned on the job. You won't learn this stuff in any textbook" - Joe Reese, fiber optics expert



It's a great class. This class is giving me opportunities in both the military and civilian worlds that I wouldn't have gotten any other way." - SGT Marcos Cortez, 440th Signal Battalion

Fiber optic cable can help provide the increased bandwidth that is needed for modern warfare.

Fiber optics were first demonstrated in 1920. A practical application, a medical endoscope, was not developed until 1957. By the 1980s, the ability to use higher quality glass for the fibers made it practical for the technology to be used in communication.

Soldiers in the class also learned about fiber optics safety. The lasers used to transmit signals through the fibers can damage un-protected eyes...especially if a technician is inspecting the fiber

ends through a microscope. Almost all fiber optics systems use infrared light which is invisible; but can still damage the eyes. Infrared detectors and filters can reduce risk to soldier's eyes. Broken fibers can also be hazardous. Broken fibers result in tiny shards of glass that can get imbedded in the skin or eyes. Using proper precautions can help avoid annoying infections or even serious injuries. "Cut through the shield and not the fiber," instructs Joe Reese as he expertly demonstrates the use of the lineman's tools, "now clean off the icky-pick with the cleaning pads." He enthusiastically explains that "icky-pick" is the term experienced

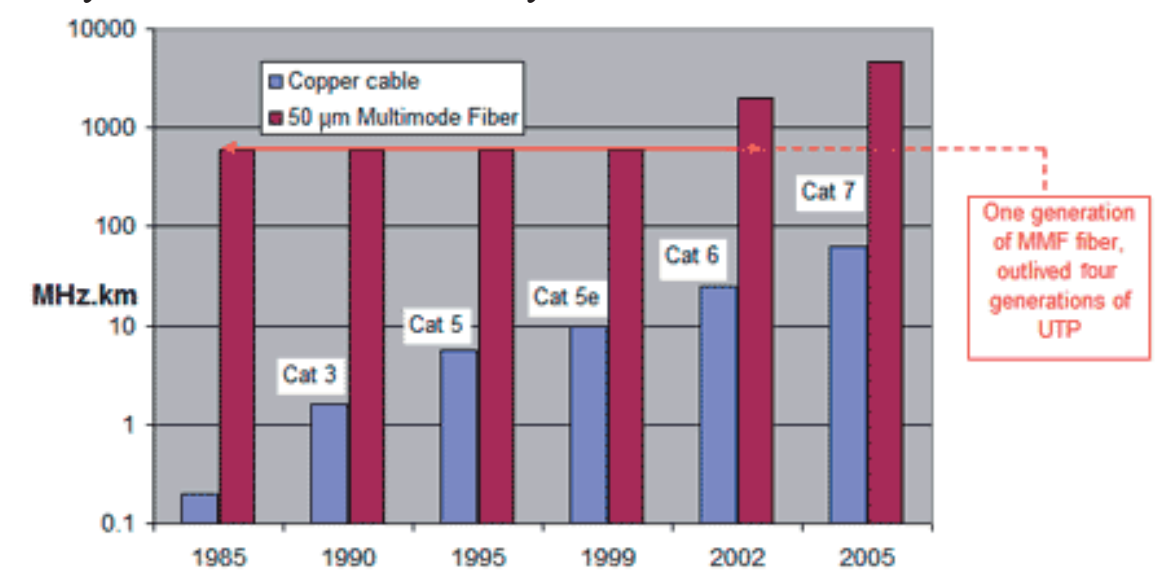
cable dogs use to describe the protective gel that coats some fiber optic filaments. He showed the soldiers how to use a small amount of baby powder to allow the fibers to slide easily into a fan-out kit. "That's something I learned on the job," says Joe, "you won't learn this stuff in any textbook." Students were enthralled by Joe's energetic teaching style. "He gave us a chance to get hands on training," remarked SPC Lawson, "It was a really great class." Red lights flashed as students used Fiber optic testers to check the ends they had just crimped onto the fibers. They terminated the fibers into

patch panels and then measured the signal strength passing through the fibers. Soldiers were excited to be learning practical skills that they would very likely be using in the near future.

The conclusion of the class was marked with the arrival of BG Dinkins. The Brigadier General congratulated soldiers on completing the course. He explained that the introduction of new technology was helping the Army meet its transformational objectives. Each soldier received a 40 hour course completion certificate signed by the instructor and BG Dinkins. The success of the

course and the relevance of the material convinced BG Dinkins to schedule future classes to train over 300 soldiers. The next class is tentatively scheduled for late January.

For additional information on class availability, contact Joe Reese at joereese2@yahoo.com or Ron Clark, Hyperion Site Manager, at ronclark12@yahoo.com



Why we need to switch: As Signal communication requirements become more and more robust, Signal needs a faster, more efficient data transfer medium that rarely needs replacing. Outliving four generations of copper, fiber fits the bill.



SGT Seth Libbey and LTC Ivory M. Freeman admire a sunset over the lake at the Headquarters Company "Birthday Bash"

Photo illustration by SPC Michael Howard and SPC Brandon Spragins

HHC Soldiers get their day in the sun

22d Signal Brigade's Headquarters company brings Soldiers together for some much deserved food, drink, and fun in the sun by SPC Gene Brown



SGT Marco Gonzalez and SSG Roy Cantu share a laugh at the HHC 22d Signal Brigade birthday bash.

the Headquarters Company "Birthday Bash"

HEADQUARTERS

together with friends that I don't get to see as often as I did in Darmstadt," said CPL Ronald Martin, the training NCOIC for Headquarters Company, 22d Signal Brigade. 1SG Brown kicked off the event by recognizing all the Soldiers that had birthdays during October and November. "It's a good feeling to be able to take time out of our busy schedules to celebrate birthdays in the middle of Iraq," said 1SG Brown. Among the birthdays missed during this time were the Brigade Commander, COL Cross, and the newly promoted LTC Freeman. After having all the Birthday Soldiers come to the front of the group to be recognized, and sung "Happy Birthday" to begin an evening full of fun, food, and near beer.

The events for the evening included the following: Spades, Domino's, Weight Lifting, Football, and a variety of other group activities. "These activities were chosen because they allowed the Soldiers to interact with each other," said Smith. With the large variety of activities, most people took to the card tables. To no one's surprise, Cross and Clark teamed up as Spades Partners, where they dominated the Bragging Rites Tournament.

The evening turned out to be a huge success. "The only thing we can do with a great event is to make it better," stated Brown, "With each month that we host this event, we will continue improve the festivities, encourage more and more Soldiers to attend, and promote the improvement of the Soldiers' morale." "There is something soothing about overlooking a lake in the middle of the desert," said Smith.

While on a year long rotation in Iraq, throwing a birthday party might not be the first thing to come to mind. The 22d Signal Brigade, however, begs to differ. CPT Dean Smith and 1SG Bobbie Brown, the Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander and first sergeant, respectively, decided to

hold the first "Birthday Bash", for November and plan to throw subsequent parties each month. With the high operational tempo of a brigade headquarters company, Smith and Brown wanted to slow things down a bit. Having many Soldiers who missed the celebration of another year in their life

passing, this was the perfect opportunity for such an event, said Smith. This also gave the Soldiers in the unit an opportunity to join together, as they are for the most part scattered to all corners of Camp Victory. The bash boosted the morale of the Soldiers as well as strengthened the cohesion within the Brigade

Headquarters, said Smith. The bash was held at the CNOSC "Back Porch" area on Nov 18. This also made for an opportune location due to the majority of the Soldiers having their duty location at the CNOSC. With the setting sun glistening on the lake as a backdrop, the setting could not have

been better to host such an event. "The [Birthday Bash] was an event carried over from 35th Signal Brigade," noted Smith, "It also provides down time for the Soldiers by allowing them to escape from their day to day work load, as well as an opportunity to celebrate missed birthdays." "It was a great to get

Injecting HOPE

SSG Syed Ahmed willingly left a position as the 22d Signal Brigade's top enlisted NBC Analyst to live on MRE's and rationed water, helping to tackle the disease, poverty, and widespread destruction left throughout Muzafarabaad, Pakistan in the aftermath of earthquake measuring at 7.6 on the Richter scale by 1LT Clare Martinez

Outside the City of Muzafarabaad, Pakistan, a 22D Signal Brigade Soldier slept inside his vehicle, awaiting daylight so he could assist constructing tents that would be used to house Soldiers from a team he deployed to support.

SSG Syed M. Ahmed, currently the 22D Signal Brigade's top enlisted Nuclear, Biological Chemical Analyst, traveled from Darmstadt, Germany, to the ruins of a city destroyed by natural disaster. He deployed in order to assist the 212th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital [M.A.S.H.] in Pakistan for over 30 days.

During Operation Earthquake Relief, Ahmed's job wasn't NBC

analysis. He deployed this time, to help people understand each other. It was his ability to speak Urdu, and communicate in Punjabi that provided support. Ahmed speaks about five languages. He speaks Hindi, Punjabi, and a dialect known in Pakistan as 'mountain language'. "Sometimes I had to speak three or four sentences before I was able to understand what they were saying."

It was kind of difficult, it was hard because the people I was translating to were very old, and some were illiterate. Medical terms are really hard. When patients go to doctors we had to explain what was going to be fixed and what the risks were. There are just English medi-

cal terms that do not translate into Urdu," Ahmed said. On Day 2 of his deployment, "some built emergency rooms, intensive care units, while others were downloading trucks, and cleaning the area," said Ahmed. "A lot of the area was filled with litter.

Everyone worked. No one just sat there. We stopped for MREs." MREs are prepackaged meals that are ready to eat. According to Ahmed, the MASH team worked 24 hours a day and required vigilant translator support. "When we first got there [Pakistan]

we didn't have cranes. We didn't have heavy forklifters. We didn't have the equipment to download what we needed to [make the hospital ready]. It was the translators job, to go get the cranes and forklifters and even the fuel we needed from Pakistanis in order to provide

Medical Support," said Ahmed. Translators coordinated with Pakistani Colonels, Generals, and police inspector generals. According to Ahmed, Pakistani police inspector generals are similar to police chiefs for a small town. The Hospital was running within

"What do you do with the people who plead with you to let them stay once they have already received medical treatment? Words just can not show the emotion of people who are pleading. As a translator, how do you say this guy doesn't have housing?" -- SSG Syed M. Ahmed, 22d Signal Brigade



SSG Syed M. Ahmed, 22D Signal Brigade's top enlisted nuclear, biological, chemical analyst gave injections to hundreds of children at schools in earthquake devastated Muzafarabaad, Pakistan while deployed in support of Operation Earthquake relief.

OUTREACH

48 hours of arriving in theater, said Ahmed. Ahmed, now an American citizen, is a native of Karachi, Pakistan. In 30 days, he used his language ability to work with the Pakistani Police, and the Pakistani Rangers. “Whenever we left the compound Pakistani Rangers escorted translators for security,” Ahmed said. “Our uniform was BDUs [Battle Dress Uniform] and softcap. Embassy people came and told us that maybe 200 kilometers Al Qaeda camps were there. To us, that was irrelevant, we still had to leave the compound,” said Ahmed. Translators traveled to different schools. 212th M.A.S.H. often traveled offsite on preventive medicine missions according to Ahmed. “If we found cases of meningitis, translators had to find out which village they are from. We went with the medics to that village and gave medicine to that person’s family and whoever that person came in touch with, within the last few weeks,” said Ahmed. Inside the City of Muzafarabaad, among the rubble and debris of earthquake ruins, a woman was found in a stream

of water. No one knew what village she was from. She had leeches on her body, and wore filthy clothing. Nobody claimed her, according to Ahmed. “We don’t know what happened,” he said. “She was in shock. We had to release her once she was treated, but release

her to where,” said Ahmed. “This is where the translators come in,” he quickly continued. “We had to coordinate with the Pakistani Army. They had a civilian agency like the Red Cross. We couldn’t just let her go,” he said sadly, “she could have fallen from the moun-

tain.” It was that mountain that kept SSG Ahmed and the 212th M.A.S.H from reaching Muzafarabaad on their first night. It was too dark and dangerous to drive along the mountainside. The advance party had already made it but the main body, where Ahmed

was, stayed outside. “While we were there [Muzafarabaad], two buses filled with people fell from the Mountains that were above us. It seemed routine,” he said. A jeep also fell from the mountain while he was there. In Muzafarabaad, many of the roads are gone and the streets are washed

away, Ahmed said. “It’s very interesting,” he said, “All the roads are above you. What looks like stars could be headlights.” Despite the absence of roads people would walk from villages 40 to 100 kilometers away for medical treatment, according to Ahmed. “Some would walk for two or three days,” he said.

“What do you with the people who plead with you to let them stay once they have already received medical treatment,” Ahmed said rhetorically. “Words just can not show the emotion of people who are pleading,” he said. “As a translator, how do you say this guy doesn’t have housing?

He has no where to go. Words just can’t convey the emotion,” he said sadly. “There was no water,” said the Army Staff Sergeant, “We were under water ration for the first two days. We could [only] consume three bottles a day even though we were working very hard and sweating.” Seven days later, although sleeping on a cot, SSG Ahmed saw a most dramatic improvement in Soldier quality of life. Ahmed and 212th CASH were able to drink more water, than they could when they first arrived in theater. Despite the scarce conditions, Army appearance standards were not relaxed. Soldiers still had to shave and it took the creative carpentry effort of U.S. Navy Construction force, also known as “Seabees.” The Seabees built a wooden foot stand with water in it so Soldiers would have a place to shave, Ahmed said. Within ten days the Soldiers who deployed to provide earthquake relief had showers, latrines and laundry facilities. 35 days later, Soldiers were still eating food from a bag, but they were grateful for their MREs, according to Ahmed. Ahmed was deployed 18 Oct. to Nov 25, 2005.



The task force 212th base of operations in Pakistan

First-timers join veterans in 32nd combat patch ceremony by CPT Alison Hanger

32ND SIGNAL BATTALION

The 32d Signal Battalion held a combat patch ceremony on December 8, 2005, to present the 22d Signal Brigade patch to Soldiers who are serving in a combat zone for the first time.

Over 100 members of the Warhorn Battalion stood in formation in the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) building on Logistical Support Area (LSA) Anaconda, Balad, Iraq, and listened to the history of the battalion, the reading of the deployment orders, and comments from the Battalion Commander, LTC William S. Schumaker, before receiving their patches. The formation was led by CPT Javier Bilbao, Headquarters and Headquarters Company Commander, who served as the Commander of Troops for the ceremony. "It's a moment in my history I'll never forget. The pride shown on the faces of these Soldiers is inspiring to anyone. We join an elite class of Soldier," says Bilbao.

During the ceremony, SFC Everett Gardner, a platoon sergeant from Delta Company, read the history of the 32d Signal Battalion which began in Missouri in 1943. The battalion has served in several wartime and peacetime endeavors to include World War II, Operation Joint Endeavor, and two rotations in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As the battalion adjutant read the deployment orders, Battalion Commander William S. Schumaker placed a combat patch on the right shoulder of the Commander of Troops who in turn presented patches to other officers. Battalion Command Sergeant Major, CSM John O. Graves then presented the patch to SFC William Rempfer, a platoon sergeant from Alpha Company, who presented the patches to the Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) in formation. Everyone listened to the history and symbolism of the patch as the NCOs placed patches on the Soldiers in ranks of the formation.

The patches now symbolize the teamwork of members of the 32d, and allow all Soldiers to know that members of the Warhorn Battalion are a true member of a combat team.



CPT Javier Bilbao, HHC, 32d Commander, places a combat patch on the officers of the 32d Signal Battalion

Photo by CPT John Aguilar, B Co, 32D

TASK FORCE ADLER

TIPS FOR MEDIA SUCCESS:



- A journalist's job is to ask questions-YOU manage the responses.
- Consider everything you say to journalists as, "On The Record."
- Generally, if you treat media fairly and with respect, they will treat you in the same way.
- Remain in control of the interview. Control your answers, your emotions and the amount of time you give to an interview.
- Speak at your level of expertise-Stay In YOUR Lane!
- Avoid speculating on politics.
- Before any response- pause and think about your answer. Pauses will not appear in print; on camera, they'll be edited out.
- When presented with multiple questions, answer only one at a time.
- Don't be pressured by silence to talk more than you want.
- Tell the truth. There's nothing wrong with saying, "I don't know" or "I can't discuss that because it might endanger others."
- By the same token, "No Comment" is not an option. Out of anything that can be said, it most strongly implies that there is something to hide.
- Avoid acronyms or explain what they mean.
- Ignore the cameras; look at the interviewer.
- Relax and smile, if appropriate.
- Before the interview, think about positive messages to deliver, "There are always risks, but we're well trained and ready for anything."
- If feasible, notify the unit public affairs officer of the interview before it takes place.

DO NOT DISCUSS RULES OF ENGAGEMENT.